

COLORED OFFICERS WANTED.

A Veteran of Three Wars Asks That Afro American Officers be Put in Charge of Colored Soldiers.

To The Colored American: In your issue of the 12th, there appeared a letter from Mr. Sherman Harvey asking for recognition for the colored volunteers in the reorganization of the Army. One reason for asking for colored officers for colored troops is, that we have young men to day with the ability and experience (both of which have been demonstrated) to command troops in all situations. Another is, white line officers commanding colored troops do not do them justice in making their report after a hard fought battle. I know this to be a fact from my experience in many Indian fights and in Cuba. I was the Right Guide of the leading battalion in the charge on San Juan Hill, and my company commander did not mention it in his report after the fight, although I led to a point where no white sergeant would attempt to go. Another is, we form nearly one tenth of the population of this country and it is essential to do an equal share of the duty that is required in the defense of the nation's honor.

When the Army was reorganized in 1866, after the civil war, the claim for colored soldiers grew out of the colored man's merit as a soldier; but the act approved July 28th, 1866, provided that the colored regiments should be officered by white men, because there were no colored men able to fill those positions at that time. But time has changed, and Ham's boys have kept pace with it and they are just as able to hold regimental rank to day as any men on earth. In asking to have the 48th and 49th regiments made a part of the regular establishment we will not be asking a favor, but only for that which belongs to us—purchased by ability and merit. But everything in Congress is done by or through political influence, and if our political leaders do not take hold of this question it will amount to nothing regardless of our ability and merit. The success of this effort is calculated to establish in the public mind a higher and a more just estimate of the bravery, fitness, ability, character of the Afro American as a soldier—for all that which has been held back heretofore in reporting the conduct of colored soldier in line of battle, will come out when these reports are made by colored officers, as it did in the Las Pinas fight.

The fact that there is some prejudice to the colored man as an officer in the army is no reason why you should give up the attempt to obtain a commission. But on the other hand the opposition shows you exactly how much force you must put in your effort to win. He who recoils from opposition in the battle of life is sure to be found in the rear ranks of progress and success. To achieve this in the first year of the new century would, indeed, be a grand beginning, and show a distinct intention to take the century or time by the forelock and keep pace with him through the years. Gentlemen of the political persuasion, the question is up to you and the result will show how many grains of determination you put in your effort to obtain commissions for colored men in the regular army or have the 48th and 49th made a part of the regular establishment. The race will learn the unity of effort more readily than in a shorter time, through a military training than it can in any other business. I believe I have said enough to give you an inkling of what I mean, so I will stop here, and hold my ear to the ground.

Yours with race pride.

E. D. GIBSON,
Sergt. U. S. Army, retired.
Salem, Roanoke, Va., Jan. 16, '01.

Grand Opening of the Douglass Hotel.

On Friday evening, February 1st the Douglass Hotel will be thrown open to the public for public inspection and for the delectation of its many friends. The house has been newly built up, fitted up, and fourteen new rooms have been added, making about sixty rooms, in all. It has all modern improvements and is up to date in every particular.

It now runs through from 235 Pa. ave., to 220 B street, n. w. Mr. and Mrs. Jones have left nothing undone to make this popular hostelry the most up to date of its kind in the city. On the evening of the grand opening an orchestra will be on hand to furnish the music and refreshments will be served to the friends and well wishers of the hotel. The reception will last from seven to twelve p. m.

Mr. Fortune in Town.

Editor T. Thomas Fortune, of "The New York Age," arrived in the city last Tuesday and will spend a few days here as the guest of friends. Mr. Fortune looks the picture of health and the fact of his adding a large wholesale and retail cigar business to his staff of worries and responsibilities improves his appearance. He never looked better. He is in addition to his connection with "The Age" a member of the firm of Douglas, Fortune & Co., Cigar Manufacturers, of New York. Many volunteer orders have come to him and it looks as though this last business adventure of his will be a howling success.

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The members of the Metropolitan A. E. Church lead in advanced sentiment along all lines. The seating capacity of this church is the largest of any church in Washington, and Friday evening, February 1st, it will be filled to overflowing. The attraction that night will be the appearance of Miss Flora Batson who has sung her way into the hearts of the American public and Mr. Gerard Millar, the celebrated basso, who is a favorite in Washington. The program embraces in addition to these, the leading musical artists and local stars of the city. Among those who will appear at this concert will be Miss Lola Johnson, soprano soloist, and a teacher of music in the public schools of Washington, Mr. R. Henri Robinson, pianist, teacher, organist, and Mr. J. Thomas Butler, the eminent and popular elocutionist.

The admission to this concert is only 25 Cents. The public is cordially invited. Remember the date,
Friday Evening, Feb. 1st, 1901.

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